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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR FOR 1996
AND RELATED MATTER

HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF TECHNICAL
COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The Administrator wishes to bring to the attention of the Executive Board the following decisions adopted by the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries at its tenth session, held in New York on 5-9 May 1997.

TCDC/10/1. REVIEW OF PROGRESS MADE IN IMPLEMENTING TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

A. Review of progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and the decisions of the High-level Committee and implementation of the recommendations of the South Commission report

The High-level Committee,

Reaffirming the validity and relevance of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries,

Taking note of the Ministerial Declaration of the 20th annual meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, held in New York in September 1996,

Taking note also of the Declaration and the Plan of Action adopted by the South-South Conference on Trade, Finance and Investment, held in San Jose, Costa Rica, in January 1997,

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Noting the final document of the Twelfth Ministerial Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in New Delhi, India, in April 1997,

Taking note of the report prepared by the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries within the United Nations Development Programme,

1. Reaffirms the great potential of technical cooperation among developing countries, which has now gained widespread acceptance as an innovative and effective instrument of technical cooperation, and urges developing countries that have not yet done so to elaborate national policies and strategies for technical cooperation among developing countries so as to give full effect to this form of cooperation;

2. Welcomes the significant efforts made by both developing countries and the United Nations development system to increase the application of technical cooperation among developing countries in development cooperation and its increasingly important role in bilateral and multilateral relations, including, inter alia, the expanded use of capacity and needs-matching exercises, which have culminated in a significant number of bilateral agreements, as well as activities related to training, transfer of technology, reconstruction, and the exchange of experience in various fields within the framework of interregional cooperation;

3. Welcomes also the efforts made by other countries to increase their involvement in the application of technical cooperation among developing countries;

4. Notes with appreciation the actions already taken towards the expansion of the technical cooperation among developing countries Information Referral System database into a multi-dimensional information system, including data on individual experts, institutional capacities, centres of excellence, as well as replicable best practices in developing countries, recognizes the constraints of the effective use of this database; in this regard, calls upon the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries to take measures, including capacity-building, aimed at enabling the least developed countries to access international information networks (for example the Internet) so that they can effectively utilize the technical cooperation among developing countries Information Referral System;

5. Commends the developing countries that have allocated resources from their national budgets for technical cooperation among developing countries through bilateral and multilateral channels, and have made available their institutional facilities, expertise and centres of excellence for this purpose;

6. Encourages developing countries that have not yet done so to establish national focal points for technical cooperation among developing countries and where focal points have already been established to ensure that the focal points are adequately staffed and also appropriately equipped to enable them to function effectively and efficiently;

7. Reiterates that South-South cooperation should not be viewed as a substitute for, but rather as a complement to, North-South cooperation and, in that connection, emphasizes the need to effectively promote triangular approaches to facilitate South-South programmes and projects;

8. Encourages developed countries that already provide support for technical cooperation among developing countries in the context of triangular arrangements or through bilateral and multilateral channels to continue to increase their financial support for technical cooperation among developing countries, including contributions to the Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation, and calls upon other developed countries to do likewise;

9. Reiterates the recommendations of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action that international institutions and developed countries, in designing, formulating and executing projects for technical cooperation in developing countries, give priority to the use of local capabilities, consultancy and expertise and, where not available, to the technical resources from other developing countries;

10. Requests the organizations of the United Nations system to take appropriate measures to improve the incorporation of technical cooperation among developing countries into their programmes and projects and to intensify efforts towards the mainstreaming of this modality in the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and encourages other relevant international institutions to undertake similar measures;

11. Calls upon organizations of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and other relevant organizations to make concerted efforts, within their mandates and agreed programmes, to assist the developing countries to utilize technical cooperation among developing countries for the promotion of small- and medium-sized enterprises, which constitute an essential component in the development strategies of most developing countries;

12. Calls upon the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to continue efforts to mobilize greater donor support in order to increase the allocation of resources for technical cooperation among developing countries including the expansion of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund's core capital and support to South Centre in accordance with decisions taken by the High-level Committee at its ninth session;

13. Recommends that the intergovernmental processes of the United Nations system, in accordance with their mandates and agreed work programmes, as well as the High-level Committee, foster closer linkages on policy and operational aspects between technical cooperation among developing countries and economic cooperation among developing countries;

14. Recommends that a new format and working methods be applied to the conduct of future meetings in order to lead to a more interactive debate and a more concrete outcome to the deliberations of the High-level Committee, taking into account the suggestions of the Committee as contained in the report of the tenth session;

15. Welcomes the important focus that will be given to economic and technical cooperation among developing countries in the operational activities for development segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council of 1997, and strongly recommends that the report of the High-level Committee on its tenth session and the report on new directions for technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC/9/3) constitute part of the background documents for the consideration of this item;

16. Notes with interest that 1998 will be the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and recommends that during its fifty-third session the General Assembly hold a commemorative meeting to mark the occasion and to mobilize further support for the effective implementation of the New Directions Strategy for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries;

17. Requests the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to submit to the High-level Committee at its eleventh session a comprehensive and analytical biennial report on the progress made in the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action as well as the present decision.

B. Review of the progress made in the implementation of the new directions strategy for technical cooperation among developing countries

The High-level Committee,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 50/119 of 20 December 1995 and related resolutions of the Economic and Social Council on economic cooperation among developing countries and technical cooperation among developing countries,

Recalling its decision 9/2 adopting the main recommendations contained in the report on new directions for technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC/9/3),

Reaffirming that South-South cooperation constitutes an important element of international cooperation for development and reiterating that developing countries have a primary responsibility for promoting technical cooperation among developing countries and that the developed countries and the United Nations system as well as other international organizations should assist and support such activities,

1. Recognizes that, while some progress has been made in the implementation of the New Directions Strategy for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, further progress can be achieved more effectively through, inter alia, the availability and provision of adequate resources, strengthening the participating institutions, and enhancing the awareness of and the commitment to the technical cooperation among developing countries modality;

2. Recommends that the intergovernmental processes of the United Nations system, in accordance with their mandates and agreed work programmes, as well as the High-level Committee, foster closer linkages on policy and operational

aspects between technical cooperation among developing countries and economic cooperation among developing countries;

3. Further urges the United Nations development system to address effectively and operationalize the implementation of other recommendations contained in the new directions strategy, in particular, new funding arrangements, expansion of the technical cooperation among developing countries, Information Referral System, identification of pivotal countries for technical cooperation among developing countries, promotion of triangular cooperation arrangements and dissemination of best practices in technical cooperation among developing countries;

4. Commends the efforts being made to promote improved, expanded and diversified linkages with the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society;

5. Welcomes, in the context of follow-up to the Programme of Action on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and within the framework of the Small Island Developing States Technical Assistance Programme, the completion of a comprehensive directory of experts on small island developing States and the identification of critical areas in the programme of action for implementation, through the application of the technical cooperation among developing countries modality;

6. Welcomes also the establishment of the Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, notes with appreciation the contribution of some developed countries to the Trust Fund, and urges the international donor community to contribute generously;

7. Welcomes the cooperation framework for technical cooperation among developing countries (1997-1999)[1] and its focus on poverty eradication, environment, production and employment and trade, investment and macroeconomic management;

8. Welcomes the decision of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme to allocate 0.05 per cent of its overall programme resources to technical cooperation among developing countries during the period 1997-1999;

9. Calls upon developing, developed and other countries, their intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, to give their full support to the effective implementation of the technical cooperation among developing countries framework, including support for innovative national, regional and interregional programmes and projects and the expanded utilization of the technical cooperation among developing countries modality in the operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

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[1] Decision 95/23 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund (E/1995/34).

10. Reiterates its request to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to instruct resident representatives to increase the application of the technical cooperation among developing countries modality in technical cooperation activities in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/41;

11. Calls upon the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to ensure that the separate identity of the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries within the United Nations Development Programme is maintained and decides to review periodically the impact and functioning of the Special Unit in promoting, monitoring and coordinating technical cooperation among developing countries on a system-wide basis;

12. Requests the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to include in his biennial report to the High-level Committee at its eleventh session information on the progress made in the implementation of the present decision.

TCDC/10/2. OVERALL FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROMOTION AND APPLICATION OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The High-level Committee,

Recalling its decision 9/3 of [2 June] 1995,

Taking note of the guidelines for the review of policies and procedures concerning technical cooperation among developing countries approved by the Administrative Committee on Coordination,

Taking note also of the report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme contained in document TCDC/10/4,

1. Takes note of the views and comments expressed at the tenth session of the High-level Committee on making the application of the guidelines more effective in order to ensure greater use of the technical cooperation among developing countries modality in the United Nations system, which now forms a new current in development cooperation;

2. Commends the United Nations agencies that have taken measures to apply the guidelines approved by the Administrative Committee on Coordination and urges the organizations and agencies that have not yet done so to take similar measures in order to ensure uniformity and consistency in the application of the guidelines;

3. Requests the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to carry out consultations on the guidelines with the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, taking into account the views expressed by Member States and the New Directions Strategy for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, and to submit the recommendations on the subject to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, for further consideration and approval, with a view that

recommendations will be submitted to the fifty-third session of the General Assembly in the context of the triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

4. Notes with appreciation the increased financial resources allocated for technical cooperation among developing countries by the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme for the programming period of 1997-1999 and, in the light of the expanding utilization of this modality, requests the Executive Board to review periodically the volume of resources allocated for the promotion of technical cooperation among developing countries, as well as the impact of the technical cooperation among developing countries modality on the implementation of the programmes of the United Nations Development Programme and incorporate the outcome of the reviews in the report of the High-level Committee for consideration;

5. Stresses the need to further mobilize additional financial resources, from all sources, with a view to assisting the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries to further implement and operationalize the New Directions Strategy for technical cooperation among developing countries;

6. Requests the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, in relation to the mandated functions and increasing responsibilities of the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, to ensure that the Special Unit is adequately staffed to enable it to execute its responsibilities effectively;

7. Requests the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to report to the High-level Committee at its eleventh session on the implementation of the present decision.

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DRAFT DECISION

97/xx. UNFPA information and communication strategy

The Executive Board:

1. Takes note of the report on the UNFPA information and communication strategy (DP/FPA/1997/8) and the comments made thereon by the Executive Board;

2. Endorses the overall goal of the UNFPA information and communication strategy, which is to promote the principles, goals and objectives of the International Conference on Population and Development and to help turn these principles, goals and objectives into practical reality at the national, regional and international levels;

3. Further endorses the specific goals and corresponding strategies of the information and communication activities of the United Nations Population Fund as contained in paragraphs 4 and 22 of the report;

4. Stresses the importance of maintaining linguistic balance in the electronic dissemination of information;

5. Also stresses that monitoring and evaluation are integral and important parts of information and communication activities and that there is a need to strengthen these functions, taking into account the difficulty, methodologically and operationally, of measuring the impact or effectiveness of such activities;

6. Requests the Executive Director to report orally each year, at the annual session, on the progress in the implementation of the present decision and on the coordinating efforts undertaken in this area within the United Nations system;

7. Also requests the Executive Director to review the Fund's information and communication strategy in four years and to report thereon to the Executive Board at its annual session 2001.

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UNFPA

DRAFT DECISION

97/xx. ICPD + 5: Five-year review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development

The Executive Board

1. Notes with appreciation the proposal of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund to undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

2. Requests the Executive Director to undertake preparatory activities for the review and appraisal within the mandate of the United Nations Population Fund;

3. Invites the President of the Executive Board to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, through the forthcoming session of the Economic and Social Council, the proposal for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference of Population and Development, for the consideration of the General Assembly and subsequent decision on the process and modalities.

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UNFPA

DRAFT DECISION

97/xx. Recommendations on the programming process of the United Nations Population Fund

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Executive Director on the programming process of the United Nations Population Fund (DP/FPA/1997/9);

2. Recognizes that the primary responsibility for developing a country programme lies with the Government of the programme country with the support of the United Nations Population Fund;

3. Requests that in its programming process the United Nations Population Fund take into account the following, bearing in mind the need to limit the administrative burden:

(a) That during the Programme Review and Strategy Development process, the United Nations Population Fund will offer briefings at the field level for interested parties on the emerging findings;

(b) That the United Nations Population Fund will make available the summary of the Programme Review and Strategy Development process (the country recommendation), which will show: (i) proposed strategic actions and their rationale; (ii) the comparative advantage of the United Nations Population Fund and its complementarity vis-à-vis other actors; and (iii) possible thematic areas, drawing throughout also on lessons learned from other programmes;

(c) That the country recommendation will be made available by the secretariat to all members of the Executive Board and interested observers, who may offer views on the recommendation, within six weeks of transmission, which the secretariat will take into account in further developing the programme; the United Nations Population Fund will inform the Executive Board of this process; these views will also be made available to all members of the Executive Board and interested observers; the United Nations Population Fund may arrange a discussion at headquarters, if needed, with the participation of the programme country;

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4. Requests that country programmes presented to the Executive Board contain clear statements of purpose, deliverables (for each sub-programme area), financial parameters and the indicators by which the United Nations Population Fund will measure programme performance, effectiveness and impact;

5. Decides that country programmes will be considered for approval by the Executive Board without discussion unless one is requested by more than one member, in writing, two weeks before the session;

6. Recommends that the efforts of working towards harmonized arrangements for country programming processes in the United Nations system should, when possible, be coordinated and harmonized with other funds and programmes;

7. Requests that the operation of these arrangements be reviewed by the Executive Director at such a time as to allow a report to be presented to the Executive Board at its annual session 2000.

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REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Draft report

1. The Administrator introduced his report to the Economic and Social Council (DP/1997/15), noting the great importance he placed on discussion of the item. He cited the common reporting format agreed on with other United Nations funds and programmes, the coverage in the report of follow-up to four related but distinct General Assembly resolutions, and the incorporation of comments and recommendations of the Executive Board on the report of the previous year.

2. He noted that the follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 96/42 was directly linked to the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 47/199 and 50/120. As Administrator, he served as Convenor of the Executive Committee of the Development Cooperation Group, one of the four sector groups created by the Secretary-General. As Convenor of the Executive Committee, he had prioritized the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/120 and the implementation of the Secretary-General's "track one" reform measures in the Development Cooperation Group. The Executive Committee, which met monthly, aimed to strengthen the resident coordinator system, the move to common premises and services, and to formulate a United Nations development assistance framework. On 8 April 1997, the Executive Committee had agreed to maintain the current arrangement regarding the resident coordinator system under the stewardship of UNDP, with the understanding that there would be major improvements in the way it functioned. He then described several aspects of the resident coordinator system that would be examined by the Executive Committee of the Development Cooperation Group. The Administrator elaborated on the comparative advantages of UNDP in leading the resident coordinator system. The leadership of the Administrator as Convenor of the Executive Committee of the Development Cooperation Group was coherent with that of UNDP as steward of the resident coordinator system at the country level. He noted that the Development Cooperation Group had taken up the issues of common premises and services and the proposed development cooperation framework. The Office for United Nations System Support and Services (OUNS), which supported him in his role as Convenor

of the Executive Committee, would be strengthened through future staff secondments from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

3. As one of the best examples of a coordinated system-wide undertaking, the Administrator also cited the work of inter-agency groups established by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) to constitute an integrated framework for follow-up to the major United Nations conferences. A workshop on the follow-up to conferences would be organized by OUNS and the ACC Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) in autumn 1997 at the Turin Centre, prior to continued review of the subject at the second session of ACC in 1997. The Administrator cited his interest in rationalizing the relationship between the process of the inter-agency groups and the intergovernmental reviews of the follow-up to conferences, including the need for more streamlined reporting arrangements. There could be, for example, reporting on each conference by lead agencies to the respective functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, with the support of the United Nations Secretariat. Similarly, reports based on the work of the three ACC Task Forces and the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality would be prepared annually for the Council, coordinated by the Convenor of the Development Cooperation Group. Thus, both conference-by-conference reporting on overall implementation and reporting on United Nations assistance to programme countries would be possible.

4. In the follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/43, the report (DP/1997/15) cited the measures taken to enhance collaboration between UNDP and the Bretton Woods institutions. The Administrator informed the Executive Board that UNDP was aware of the new directions taken by the management of the World Bank and hoped that dialogue with the Bank would be enhanced with a view to ensuring complementarity and a division of labour between the two organizations. He expressed the view that grant-based technical cooperation aimed at building key governance capabilities for sustainable human development should be the responsibility of UNDP.

5. In referring to the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/227, the Administrator informed the Executive Board that UNDP was in the process of developing a comprehensive funding strategy. Owing to the number of informal consultations on other subjects, it had not been possible to hold informals to prepare the way for the funding strategy. He hoped that the paper would be available at the third regular session 1997 following discussions at the present session, at the informal consultations in June, and at the Economic and Social Council. Paragraphs 33 and 36 of document DP/1997/15 contained the kernel of a resource mobilization strategy, which would be further elaborated on in the paper. He cited the expected income for UNDP in 1997 to be an estimated $2 billion in total resources, with approximately $800 million of that amount in contributions to the core budget. He emphasized that while the target for the overall resource mobilization of UNDP would be the sum total of all resource mobilization targets of all country cooperation frameworks, the bedrock was the contributions to the core budget. The core resource mobilization target of $3.3 billion for 1997-1999 contained in Executive Board decision 95/23 should be taken seriously. Despite reform and streamlining by UNDP and improvements in governance, as cited in General Assembly resolution 50/227, the contributions to

the core budget continued to decrease. For UNDP to undertake all the work that it was responsible for and to respond effectively to the needs of developing countries, it would need increased contributions to its core budget. UNDP would like to move to a funding strategy that featured a more predictable base at a higher level than was currently the case.

6. In introducing the UNFPA reports to the Economic and Social Council (DP/FPA/1997/10 (Part V)), the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) stated that coordination of operational activities was widely recognized as the overarching priority of the United Nations development framework. In that regard, UNFPA continued to work closely with all of its development partners, in, for example, chairing inter-agency task forces on the follow-up to international conferences, in participation in such mechanisms as the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP), ACC and CCPOQ, and continuing its close cooperation with other agencies and organizations in strengthening the resident coordinator system.

7. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) informed the Executive Board that relations between UNFPA and the Bretton Woods institutions and funding for operational activities had been dealt with in the document as a build-up to the triennial policy review scheduled for 1998. The position of UNFPA on funding for operational activities was being coordinated with the United Nations Secretariat as part of the Secretary-General's report to the Economic and Social Council. The Fund was looking at new ways of collaborating with the Bretton Woods institutions within the terms of the UNFPA mandate. Other topics addressed in the report included harmonization of programme processes, national execution and national capacity-building, and monitoring and evaluation of UNFPA programmes.

General comments

8. Delegations welcomed the introductory remarks of the Administrator and the Deputy Executive Director and expressed their satisfaction with the reports to the Economic and Social Council of the Administrator (DP/1997/15) and the Executive Director (DP/FPA/1997/10 (Part V)), citing the improvements over those of previous years. Some speakers stated that more analysis and reference to problems faced by UNDP and UNFPA in implementing the legislation could be included in future reports to the Council. More information on linkages with overall United Nations reform would be welcomed. Delegations appreciated the fact that the reports employed a common format with other United Nations funds and programmes and noted that their contents illustrated progress in the follow-up and implementation of General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions. A few delegations proposed that the reports include suggested recommendations to the Council on follow-up to resolutions. One delegation requested more clarity on data in the report of UNFPA relating to country-level operations and expressed support for a recommendation of the Executive Director to lessen and streamline reporting arrangements.

9. One speaker, on behalf of the African Group, underlined the support of that regional group for the work done by UNDP to follow up the resolutions of the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council, as cited in DP/1997/15.

Follow-up to implementation of General Assembly resolutions 47/199 and 50/120 and to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/42

10. Many speakers welcomed the remarks made by the Administrator on the part of the report concerning the resolution, in particular with regard to the resident coordinator system and the increased commitment to partnership both at the headquarters and country levels. Much progress had been seen in the area, including on the harmonization of programme cycles and budget presentations. An update on programme delivery was requested, an area that many speakers stressed must continue to be a top priority of UNDP. One speaker, also on behalf of another, requested information on the 26 countries that would not have harmonized programmes by 1999. The rise in nationally executed programmes was welcomed and should be further increased. The issuance of the reference manual for operational activities was welcomed. Support for the leadership role of UNDP in the resident coordinator system was expressed. More information on the coordination of regional activities was sought.

11. Efforts to broaden the pool of resident coordinators coming from different United Nations organizations should be continued and enhanced. Some speakers requested that the Administrator continue to provide an update to the Executive Board at future sessions on the numbers of resident coordinators coming from outside of UNDP, as well as information on the staff secondments to OUNS. Many speakers emphasized the importance of strengthening the resident coordinator system and underlined the need for all organizations to be fully committed to that goal. One speaker cited the need for resident coordinators to be impartial and to function as a partner with others in the system. Another speaker requested further information about the cost of managing the resident coordinator system.

12. Several delegations urged UNDP to continue the move to common premises and services in order to fulfil the requirements of General Assembly resolution 50/120. The document (DP/1997/15) contained reservations on that issue in the view of some speakers. Some speakers supported the need to look at common premises and services on a case-by-case basis. One delegation stated that it was considering a "soft earmarking" of funding to promote common premises in 1997. Another delegation requested further information about the reference in paragraph 28 to the use of real estate management consultants by the JCGP Sub-Group on Common Premises and Services. A query was raised about whether there was a detrimental effect to harmonization when funds and programmes used different information systems.

13. Enhanced harmonization of monitoring and evaluation activities by UNDP was also encouraged.

14. Several delegations welcomed actions undertaken by UNFPA, as described in the report, in the following areas: harmonization of programme cycles and programming procedures; national execution and national capacity-building; monitoring and evaluation; decentralization; and harmonization of budget presentations. The achievement of close to a 50:50 gender ratio of Professional staff was also welcomed. With regard to monitoring and evaluation, delegations welcomed the inclusion of lessons learned in country programme presentations.

Several speakers welcomed the clear commitment of UNFPA to the resident coordinator system.

15. Many delegations supported the use by UNFPA of the programme approach and the role of the Executive Board in the programming process. They welcomed the decentralization of approval authority as a means to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of programme delivery. A few delegations questioned the effect that decentralization would have in terms of the procedures and role of the Fund's internal Programme Review Committee.

Follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/227

16. Several delegations looked forward to receiving the UNDP paper on funding, which they stated should include information on the consequences of declines in funding levels to the core budget. Many speakers expressed concern about the shortfall in contributions to core resources. Some delegations underlined that core resources ensured fairness and universality of assistance. Some speakers cited what they considered to be an unfair burden-sharing among donors, with concentration among only a few at the highest levels. Traditional donors and emerging donors should be encouraged to contribute more to UNDP core resources. A query was raised about the linkage between core and non-core resources, as stated in paragraph 37 of document DP/1997/15. One delegation, also on behalf of another, suggested that funding on a more predictable basis, such as for a three-year cycle, could be explored. Other suggestions for innovative funding mechanisms would be welcomed. While some speakers supported the target of doubling of the UNDP resource base, as stated in the proposals for change, others questioned the viability of that target.

17. One speaker expressed support for the government cost-sharing mechanism, which he stated had not been elaborated on in the document and thus more information on the mechanism was needed for a full debate on it. The majority of cost-sharing projects in his country related directly to sustainable human development or governance programmes.

18. One delegation informed the Executive Board that a request for increased funding to UNDP over its 1997 level, to $100 million, had been made for 1998. His delegation supported the effective use of resources by UNDP as a means to ensure greater contributions from major donors. In particular, UNDP programmes must have a clear focus and duplication with programmes of other organizations should be minimized. Further economization might be needed, including the consideration of closing some UNDP offices.

19. Some speakers requested further information about the modalities for tapping of the private sector as an additional source of funding, as cited in paragraph 36 of document DP/1997/15. Caution was advised in relation to that activity, as it was noted that private capital flows often went to only a small number of countries.

20. One delegation expressed the view that the role of UNDP at the Lyon Summit should have been included in the document.

21. With regard to UNFPA resources, many delegations welcomed the conference room paper on meeting the goals of the ICPD: consequences of resource shortfalls up to the year 2000 (DP/FPA/1997/CRP.1). Delegations noted that the paper, with its clear resource targets and goals, was a good contribution for further discussion on such issues as the ways and means for increasing core resources for operational activities. The Executive Board requested that UNFPA refine the methodology contained in the paper and introduce it as a formal document at the third regular session 1997. A number of delegations supported the increase in programme resource allocations to Africa from 1995 to 1996. One delegation noted that proposed UNFPA initiatives on debt swaps would need to be examined in light of existing mechanisms for debt relief.

Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/36 and to decisions taken at major international United Nations conferences including implementation of the programmes of action adopted by them

22. Several delegations expressed support for the work of UNDP in relation to the implementation of the strategy outlined in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation for Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) publication entitled "Shaping the 21st Century" and the linkage of that strategy with the integrated framework for follow-up to United Nations conferences. One delegation emphasized the critical importance of country-level activities in that regard, and underlined the need for UNDP, in cooperation with bilateral donors, to play a leading role in local coordination of the follow-up to conferences and the DAC strategy. The delegation also requested information on the participation of UNDP in the World Bank/OECD-DAC/United Nations seminar on indicators, to be held in Paris on 20 and 21 May 1997. Positive comment was made about the UNDP role in coordination of the follow-up to conferences at both ACC and at country levels. The conference room paper on the 20/20 concept (DP/1997/CRP.20) was welcomed. Greater information on the follow-up to the World Food Summit was sought. The Administrator's proposals for enhancing the follow-up to conferences in intergovernmental forums was requested to be issued in writing.

23. Many delegations welcomed UNFPA activities in the follow-up to international conferences and, in particular, its role as Chair of the Task Force on Basic Social Services for All. UNFPA participation in the other two ACC Task Forces was also cited positively.

Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/43

24. UNDP was encouraged to continue its cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions, especially the World Bank. Several speakers noted their support for the formal agreements signed by UNDP with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. More detailed information on collaboration with the World Bank in poverty assessment and strategies was requested.

25. Several delegations stated that UNFPA should continue to strengthen linkages with other multilateral organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and with bilateral partners. At the same time, the Fund should continue to promote and strengthen South-South cooperation. Collaboration with

the World Bank at the country level should be further strengthened to ensure greater policy coherence.

Responses

26. The Administrator thanked delegations for their comments and responded to the queries raised. He noted that it was often difficult for UNDP to quantify the impact of its activities and more analysis would be undertaken in that respect. He would welcome the views of bilateral aid organizations on how to measure the relationship between resource availability and impact.

27. He emphasized the powerful link between reform in the United Nations and at UNDP. Reform at the United Nations had been carefully monitored and was taken into consideration in the change proposals put forward by UNDP. He agreed that the resident coordinator system must serve the system as a whole. UNDP must be increasingly dedicated to supporting that system.

28. In a total of 81 countries, the programming cycles of JCGP agencies would be harmonized by 1999. Although 26 programmes would still require harmonization, he stressed the strong commitment of UNDP to doing so. The Development Assistance Framework would ensure that programming cycles were harmonized.

29. He underlined the commitment of UNDP to common premises and noted that the move from ownership to rental would reduce the need for hiring real estate consultants. Some 17 commitments from other funds and programmes had been made to broadening the pool of resident coordinators. He cited the lack of response to advertisements for certain posts as a contributing factor to the move to widen the pool. An informal mechanism to explore the differences among JCGP members information systems had begun to operate in April.

30. The Administrator stated that UNDP would reach out to emerging donors for contributions to core resources. He was cautiously optimistic that some progress would be made in that area, but emphasized that contributions from traditional donors could not be replaced. UNDP would proceed cautiously in raising money from private sources. He confirmed that UNDP was contributing its ideas to the discussion at the Economic and Social Council on innovative sources of financing. He noted that the decline in core contributions was linked to an overall decline in official development assistance (ODA). The United Nations share of ODA must be increased. In that regard, UNDP could manage twice the amount of resources it had at the present time. He welcomed an informal discussion with the Executive Board on resource mobilization. In response to the query raised, he stated that increased contributions to core could indeed provide an impetus to increased non-core contributions, as cited in paragraph 37 of the document. He informed the Board that he would make a separate presentation on programme delivery later in the session.

31. In response to queries raised, he noted that UNDP had played a role in both the Lyon Summit and in developing the DAC strategy. The follow-up to the World Food Summit as a more recent conference had not moved along as far as that of the other conferences. He noted that the Food and Agriculture Organization of

the United Nations and ACC had agreed that the follow-up would occur within the framework of the integrated follow-up to conferences.

32. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration), in response to a query raised, explained that at present, programmes and subprogrammes and some projects were approved by the Programme Review Committee. UNFPA would strive towards greater decentralization in order to enable the country offices to approve all projects and the details of the subprogrammes. With regard to collaboration with the World Bank, he noted that such collaboration was well established through work at the country level in programme development and in consultations between World Bank officials and UNFPA geographical division heads on strategies aimed at ensuring coherence. UNFPA and the World Bank also collaborated, inter alia, in South-South cooperation and in the Global Contraceptive Commodity Programme. UNFPA was working with the World Bank and OECD/DAC on refining indicators for sustainable development.

33. The President informed the Executive Board that the issue of resource mobilization in UNDP would be taken up in informal consultations in June 1997.

34. The Executive Board took note of the reports of the Administrator on reports to the Economic and Social Council (DP/1997/15) and the report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council (DP/FPA/1997/10 (Part V)) and the comments made therein, and decided to transmit the reports to the Economic and Social Council.

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DRAFT DECISION

97/xx. Internal audit

The Executive Board

1. Welcomes the format of the reports on internal audit of the United Nations Development Programme (DP/1997/16/Add.6) and of the United Nations Population Fund (DP/FPA/1997/10, Part IV);

2. Takes note of the content of these reports and of the observations made by delegations during the debate;

3. Expresses support for the respective proposals of the Administrator and Executive Director for strengthening the internal audit function of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund.

May 1997